

Paul Ryan Voted to End Medicare

GOP Congressman continues crusade against seniors.

While millions of Americans struggle to keep or find affordable and secure health insurance, Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI) and other Republicans are trying to dismantle the Medicare programs that millions of seniors rely on.

In April, Ryan joined 80 percent of House Republicans and voted to end Medicare as we know it, turning it into a voucher program that would force seniors to seek private insurance. Had this plan passed, it would have raised costs for all Medicare benefi-

aries while lowering the quality of care for the less-affluent, something the AARP called "a very dangerous idea."

Republicans have opposed Medicare from the start. Despite its success and place as one of the country's most important programs,



they have bragged about opposing its creation in the first place. Some Republicans have even gone as far as calling seniors greedy for using Medicare.

Luckily, the proposal failed on a roll call vote, protecting future generations of seniors from the stress and danger of having to seek private insurance.

Ending Medicare has long been a movement by the GOP, but it would come at high cost. The Republican proposals would force senior citizens to fend for themselves,

which would prove to be a much costlier option.

Many have been quick to point out that while Ryan has been critical of government health programs, he is privileged to receive health care through the federal government as a member of Congress.

While openly criticizing government programs, he accepts the world-class health coverage funded by taxpayer dollars.

President Obama recently called Medicare a sacred trust with America's seniors, which is

why the President's health insurance reform plan will not use a dime of the Medicare trust to fund itself. Instead the President's plan will eliminate waste and strengthen the financial health of the program.

Earlier this year Ryan voted against expanding the State Childrens Health Insurance Program (SCHIP), which gives health coverage to low-income children.

SCHIP currently provides millions of underprivileged children in America the access to doctors and medical profes-

sionals. In a statement released after voting against the bill, Ryan called the legislation "deceptive."

Ryan's top campaign contributors also happen to be insurance companies, bringing into questions the real motivation behind the Congressman's voting record.

Ryan is in favor of taking a different approach to solving this problem through free Marketing Concepts. Within these concepts there is no regulation that all Americans be covered.

The truth about health insurance reform

As the debate over health insurance reform continues, it may be easy to lose sight of what the actual issues are.

Approximately 47 million Americans are currently uninsured. Countless more live in fear of losing their coverage or being denied treatment that can either save or make their lives better.

This doesn't mean those happy with their coverage will be forced to change plans and this doesn't mean the government will force anyone to see a certain doctor.

Health insurance reform does mean premiums will be reduced for everyone, even those with insurance through their jobs. Increased competition and a public option will keep insurance companies honest.

Claims that reform will raise taxes on the middle class are untrue.

Under the current system, millions of Americans pay a hidden tax of \$1,000 that covers the cost of the uninsured. By creating affordable insurance for Americans, the burden of the uninsured would be lessened.

If a \$1,000 tax sounds like a lot now, consider that it will only continue to grow as more and more people lose their insurance as premiums skyrocket. Of course, with reform, that alarming trend can be stopped now.

Desperate claims by the right that illegal immigrants will get insurance are untrue. Undocumented immigrants will not be eligible to participate in a health insurance exchange or receive subsidies or tax credits.

With all the misinformation about reform, it's important to remember the facts and that the

cost of inaction is too high.

According to a new report by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the number of businesses able to provide coverage will continue to erode. If we continue on our current path, in 30 years we'll spend one in every three dollars on health care costs.

While President Obama and Democratic leaders work tirelessly to ensure that Americans will have access to stable, secure and affordable coverage, Republicans have attempted to kill reform for purely partisan political gain.

Every day Americans become one step closer to overcoming Republican opposition and finally getting the reform they need and deserve as American citizens.

Congressman Ryan's Biggest Donors

2009 - 2010 Top Contributors

Contributor	Total	Indivs	PACs
Northwestern Mutual	\$9,000	\$3,000	\$6,000
Windway Capital	\$9,000	\$9,000	\$0
Select Medical Corp	\$8,200	\$8,200	\$0
Natl Assn/Insurance & Financial Advisors	\$6,000	\$0	\$6,000
Patton Boggs LLP	\$5,500	\$500	\$5,000

Three out of five of Ryan's top contributors are insurance companies, while Patton Boggs LLP is a well known Washington D.C. lobbying firm. Constituents may want to consider who your congressman represents with reference to health care reform.

2009 - 2010 Top Contributors By Industry

Industry	Total	Indivs	PACs
Insurance	\$48,250	\$5,250	\$43,000
Retired	\$40,035	\$40,035	\$0
Health Professionals	\$35,555	\$7,555	\$28,000
Securities & Investment	\$25,450	\$8,450	\$17,000
Misc Finance	\$21,750	\$17,250	\$4,500

Source: <http://www.opensecrets.org>

Public option fact vs. fiction

Democrats and President Obama have proposed creating a public health insurance option as a key component to reform.

Recently the Senate Finance Committee passed a version of health insurance reform legislation that includes a public option. This means that all five Congressional committees with jurisdiction over reform have now passed a public option.

The public option is an essential component to reform because it will keep insurance companies honest, increase competition and ensure that every American has access to quality affordable coverage.

Reform cannot succeed if it leaves large portions of the population uninsured and the public option prevents that from happening.

The goal of reform

is protecting American citizens, not insurance companies' bottom lines. A public option will keep prices low by forcing insurance companies to compete with a strong marketplace based on choice. This will reduce price gouging and selective coverage in the industry, while making preexisting conditions a thing of the past.

Fear mongering by the right wing has led some to believe a public option will lead to rationing of care. In reality, no proposals being considered by Congress would ration care.

Medicare is proof that quality care can be provided by a publicly administered program without rationing. Those who perpetuate this argument forget that rationing is done everyday under our current system.

A majority of health insurance companies deny coverage and procedures to those who need it most.

Conservatives have also tried to kill the public option by falsely claiming that a public option means the government will make decisions about a person's care. The reality is a public option would let the important medical decisions be made between a patient and their doctor.

All too often these decisions are already made by an insurance company under the status quo. Insurers will not hesitate to block patient access to specialists or deny claims.

The public option will keep insurance company profits from getting in the way of important care. It's a necessary component of reform that cannot be ignored.

Lacking leadership GOP turns extreme



Lacking leadership from RNC Chair Michael Steele (left), conservatives like Eric Cantor (center) have often followed the advice of Rush Limbaugh and members of the "tea party" movement (right).

As the right searches for true leadership, they have increasingly begun to follow the lead of conservative talking heads like Rush Limbaugh and Glen Beck.

Republican National Committee

Chair Michael Steele has long been challenged by these pundits as movements like the "tea party" supporters move the Republican Party further to the extreme right.

False claims of socialism and com-

parisons of the US to the USSR are just the beginning as the GOP moves toward an increasingly extreme base that doesn't represent the views of a majority of Americans.